

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 AF-06

EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-09 FEA-01 ERDA-07 AID-05 CEA-01

CIEP-02 COME-00 EB-07 FPC-01 INT-05 OMB-01 SAM-01

OES-05 STR-04 TRSE-00 FRB-01 IO-10 ERDE-00 /153 W

----- 130942

P 032041Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7841

UNCLAS CARACAS 2313

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR VE US

SUBJECT: VENEZUELAN REACTION TO KISSINGER SPEECH MIXED

SUMMARY: REACTION BY MOST VENEZUELAN POLITICAL LEADERS TO THE SECRETARY'S MARCH 1 ADDRESS ON LATIN AMERICA HAS BEEN MIXED.

ACCION DEMOCRATICA (AD) LEADERS WERE MORE RECEPTIVE TO THE SECRETARY'S REMARKS BUT MOST OPPOSITION LEADERS WERE HARSH IN THEIR CRITICISMS, WITH THE FAR LEFT THE MOST CRITICAL.

END SUMMARY.

1. GONZALO BARRIOS, AD PRESIDENT AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS, COMMENTED BRIEFLY TO THE PRESS ON KISSINGER'S SPEECH. "THE TENDENCY OF THE LATIN AMERICANS TO EXPRESS THEIR CONCERNS ABOUT THEIR INDEPENDENCE BY MEANS OF A FEELING OF OPPOSITION TO THE UNITED STATES WHICH KISSINGER DENOUNCES," BARRIOS SAID, "IS A LARGELY CORRECT JUDGMENT. BUT HE FAILED TO ADD THAT THIS ATTITUDE HAS MUCH JUSTIFICATION IN THE COURSE OF OUR HISTORY."

2. JOSE ANGEL CILIBERTO, EXECUTIVE POLITICAL SECRETARY OF AD, SAID THAT THE CONTENTS OF KISSINGER'S SPEECH CONTAINED "LARGELEY UNCLASSIFIED

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POSITIVE ASPECTS" IN RELATION TO THE POLICY WHICH THE U.S.

PLANS TO FOLLOW WITH LATIN AMERICA IN THE FUTURE, WHICH CILIBERTO SAID HE HOPES WILL BE PUT INTO EFFECT. HOWEVER, CILIBERTO THOUGHT THE SPEECH HAD PARTS THAT WERE UNCLEAR, "DEMONSTRATING THAT THERE STILL IS NOT A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT OF LATIN AMERICA'S PROBLEMS AND ASPIRATIONS."

3. COPEI SENTOR ARISTIDES BEAUJON FELT THAT THE KISSINGER SPEECH CONSTITUTED "A RECEPTIVE REPLY" TO THE VENEZUELAN POSITION EXPRESSED AT THE VENEZUELAN-U.S. SEMINAR IN BOSTON IN JANUARY. COPEI LEADER LUIS HERRERA CAMPINS COMMENTED THAT IN SOME RESPECTS KISSINGER "CORRECTLY ASCERTAINED THE CAUSES OF FRICITION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND LATIN AMERICA BUT HE IS FAR FROM OUTLINING FORMULAS FOR SOLUTION." IN THE ONLY REACTION REPORTED BY THE PRESS TO THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENT ON CUBA, HERRERA CAMPINS SAID KISSINGER'S BEGINNING "IS SUBJECT TO A SERIES OF SUBJECTIVE INTERPRETATIONS." HERRERA CAMPINS THOUGHT KISSINGER'S REFERENCE TO LATIN AMERICA'S VULNERABILITY TO RAPID CHANGES IN PRICE FOR THEIR EXPORTS CONTAINED "A HIDDEN AND SUBTLE THREAT" INSTEAD OF BEING "A FRIENDLY REMARK OR AN OBJECTIVE APPRECIATION OF A REALITY."

4. THE COMMENT BY REPUBLICAN DEMOCRATIC UNION (URD) DEPUTY RAMON TENORIO SIFONTES THAT "THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT COMPREHENDED THAT THE OLD LATIN AMERICAN ORDER IS STEADILY CRUMBLING AWAY AND A NEW ORDER BASED ON A VIGOROUS NATIONALISM IS COMING INTO BEING" WAS TYPICAL OF MANY BY OPPOSITION LEADERS. TENORIO REJECTED AS "INCORRECT" KISSINGER'S "ACCUSATION" THAT LATIN AMERICA HAS TRIED TO DEFINE ITS INDEPENDENCE THROUGH "A CONSTANT EXPRESSION OF OPPOSITION TO THE UNITED STATES." URD DEPUTY ISMENIA DE VILLALBA AGREED WITH KISSINGER THAT THE TIME FOR DIALOGUE INSTEAD OF CONFRONTATION HAS COME, "BUT NOT A DIALOGUE LIKE KISSINGER WANTED IN BUENOS AIRES TO PALLIATE THE U.S. FOREIGN TRADE LAW."

5. CASTING ASIDE KISSINGER'S SPEECH AS "SO MUCH STRATEGIC SMOKE," PEOPLE'S ELECTORAL MOVEMENT (MEP) PRESIDENT LUIS BELTRAN PRIETO REGARDED THE SPEECH AS "A CONFESSION THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL MAKE COMMON CAUSE WITH ITS BUSINESSMEN AND THAT THE TRADE LAW EXISTS TO MAINTAIN THEIR INTERESTS." "WHEN KISSINGER UNCLASSIFIED

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PROMISES A NEW DEAL," PRIETO ADDED, "LATIN AMERICAN SUSPICIONS ARE NOT DISPELLED WITH A DECLARATION." CONCERNING THE PANAMA CANAL, PRIETO SAID THERE CANNOT BE ANY OTHER SOLUTION THAN TO RETURN TO PANAMA JURISDICTION OVER ITS OWN TERRITORY."

6. MOVEMENT TO SOCIALISM (MAS) SECRETARY GENERAL POMPEYO MARQUEZ FOUND KISSINGER'S SPEECH TO BE A REPETITION OF THE "NEW DIALOGUE," THIS TIME COUCHED "IN NEW TERMINOLOGY TO CONCEAL THE SAME NEO-

COLONIALIST REALITIES." IN A SIMILAR COMMENT MAS DEPUTY TEODORO PETKOFF SAID KISSINGER FAILS TO UNDERSTAND THAT "THE BIPOLAR STRUCTURE OF THE WORLD IS BROKEN AND THAT WE LIVE IN AN ERA IN WHICH SMALL, NEEDY COUNTRIES CAN ACT TOGETHER TO DEFEND THEIR INTERESTS AGAINST IMPERIALIST EXPLOITATION." PETKOFF SAW THE SPEECH "AS A VEILED THREAT AGAINST COUNTRIES THAT ASSOCIATE TO DEFNED PRICES FOR THEIR RAW MATERIALS." OTHER LEFTISTS WERE OF LIKE MIND. VENEZUELAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCV) LEADER RADAMES LARRAZABAL SAID THE SPEECH WAS CONCILIATORY ON THE SURFACE BUT IN FACT WAS "AN ATTACK ON OPEC AND THE UNITED POLICY OF THE UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO DEFEND THEIR RIGHTS." MOVEMENT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT (.84) LEADER AMERICO MARTIN ACCUSED KISSINGER OF TRYING TO "DISARM" THE OPEC SUMMIT IN ALGIERS AND CALLED ON THE HEADS OF STATE TO "LOWER PRODUCTION, BREAK WITH THE DOLLAR, AND STRENGTHEN THE UNITY OF THE OIL EXPORTERS AND THE UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES IN THE DEFENSE OF PRICES FOR ALL RAW MATERIALS."

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, SPEECHES, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CARACA02313
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750074-0376
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750389/aaaadcuk.tel
Line Count: 133
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUN 2003 by MarshK0>; APPROVED <19 FEB 2004 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VENEZUELAN REACTION TO KISSINGER SPEECH MIXED SUMMARY: REACTION BY MOST VENEZUELAN POLITICAL LEADERS TO THE
TAGS: PFOR, VE, US, XM, (KISSINGER, HENRY A)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006